

What is claimed is:

1. A system for providing web browser access and control of devices located at customer premises via a communication network comprising:

5 a processing device;

a memory device for storing application program interfaces corresponding to said devices;

interface devices configured to establish a connection between at least one of said devices and said network, a first number of said interface devices being configured to  
10 receive inbound signals transmitted to said premises gateway via said network on a first communication link selected from the group consisting of a twisted pair wire link, a fiber optic link, a coaxial cable link, a hybrid fiber optic/coaxial cable link, and a wireless communication link, and to process said signals for transmission to other said interface devices, a second number of said interface devices being operable receive outbound  
15 signals generated by said devices on a second communication link selected from the group consisting of a twisted pair wire link, a fiber optic link, a coaxial cable link, a hybrid fiber optic/coaxial cable link, and a wireless communication link, to process said outbound signals for transmission to other ones of said interface devices, said memory device being operable to store data relating to said first communication link, said second  
20 communication link and protocols used thereon, respectively, said processing device being operable in accordance with said data to control routing of said inbound signals and said outbound signals to said interface devices; and

a server operable to provide at least one Markup Language-type page comprising at least one icon representing at least one of said devices, said Markup Language-type  
25 page being configured to provide at least one of device parameters corresponding to said at least one of said devices and input command functions to allow said at least one of said devices to be managed using said web browser, at least one of said processing device and said server being programmable to process said inbound signals and determine which of said application program interfaces to use to control said at least one of said  
30 devices in accordance with input signals generated using said web browser and to

generate control signals in accordance with the selected one of said application program interfaces for transmission to said at least one of said devices via the corresponding said second communication link.

5     2.     A system as claimed in claim 1, wherein said Markup Language-type page comprises a plurality of icons corresponding to a plurality of said devices to be controlled via said web browser.

10     3.     A system as claimed in claim 2, wherein said Markup Language-type page is an initial access page, said server being operable to provide different Markup Language-type pages corresponding to different ones of said plurality of said devices, each of said different Markup Language-type pages being accessed via navigation of said initial access page via said web browser.

15     4.     A system as claimed in claim 1, wherein inbound signals comprise input data received via navigation of said Markup Language-type page via said web browser, said processing device is operable to process said input data to extract device management messages provided therein, and determine to which of said application program interfaces said device management messages are to be directed, said application program  
20     interfaces being operable to convert said device management messages into commands for transmission to the corresponding said devices using the corresponding said protocols.

25     5.     A system as claimed in claim 4, wherein said input data is formatted as internet protocol packets.

6.     A system as claimed in claim 1, wherein said devices are selected from the group consisting of an environment control system, a lawn sprinkler system, a home appliance, a computer, a computer peripheral device, a telecommunications device, a television, a

disc player, a tape cassette player, a utility meter, a security system, audio/visual equipment, controllable drapes, and a lighting control device.

7. A method of providing web browser access and control of devices located at customer premises via a communication network comprising:

5 maintaining at least one Markup Language-type page comprising at least one icon representing at least one of said devices, said Markup Language-type page being configured to provide at least one of device parameters corresponding to said at least one of said devices and input command functions to allow said at least one of said devices to be managed using said web browser;

10 generating device management messages while said Markup Language-type page is navigated using said web browser to select said device parameters and said input command functions;

15 selecting one of a plurality of application program interfaces that corresponds to one of said devices to which said device management messages are directed, said plurality of application program interfaces allowing transmission of control signals to said devices via different communication media selected from the group consisting of a twisted pair wire link, a fiber optic link, a coaxial cable link, a hybrid fiber optic/coaxial cable link, and a wireless communication link and different protocols therefor; and

20 generating said control signals for transmission to said one of said devices in accordance with said selected application program interface, said control signals being formatted in accordance with a selected one of said protocols.

8. A method as claimed in claim 7, wherein said maintaining step comprises the steps of:

25 maintaining said Markup Language-type page as an initial access page comprising a plurality of icons corresponding to a plurality of said devices to be controlled via said web browser; and

30 maintaining a plurality of different Markup Language-type pages corresponding to different ones of said plurality of said devices, each of said different Markup

Language-type pages comprising said device parameters and said input command functions for their corresponding one of said devices; and

accessing each of said different Markup Language-type pages by navigating said initial access page via said web browser.

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9. A method as claimed in claim 8, further comprising the steps of generating said device management messages for different ones of said plurality of devices in response to navigating said different Markup Language-type pages via said web browser.

10 10. A method as claimed in claim 7, further comprising the step of updating said application program interfaces via said communication network.

11. A method as claimed in 7, further comprising the steps of:  
generating prompts on a display device to instruct a user to provide information  
15 relating to said devices to be controlled via said web browser;  
receiving user inputs generated in response to said prompts; and  
generating said Markup Language-type page in accordance with said user inputs.

12. A method as claimed in claim 11, wherein said generating step for said prompts  
20 comprises the step of requesting said user to enter data relating to the number of rooms on said customer premises and the identity of said devices located in each of said rooms.

13. A method as claimed in claim 12, wherein said generating step for said Markup Language-type page comprises the steps of:

25 providing said Markup Language-type page with a background resembling said customer premises; and

arranging a plurality of icons corresponding to said devices at background by location said rooms.

14. A method as claimed in claim 11, wherein said generating step for said Markup Language-type page comprises the steps of:

prompting said user to identify which of said communication media are used at said customer premises; and

5 generating representations for said different communication media identified by said user.